

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 006844

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/03/2013

TAGS: [CY](#) [GR](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH CYPRIOT ELECTION CONCERNS: ROUND FOUR:
DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: STATE 303498

(U) Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch, E.O. 12958, reasons 1.5
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: In response to reftel demarche, MFA DirGen for Northeastern Mediterranean Affairs to Ertugrul Apakan asserted that GOT intervention with the Turkish Cypriot "High Election Board" (HEB) would be improper. However, he would convey the demarche to higher levels of the MFA; in his opinion it could be conveyed to "TRNC" political authorities.

Apakan accused U.S. representatives of manipulating the December 14 elections. End Summary.

GOT: We Warned TRNC About New Citizens....

¶2. (C) In an October 31 call to deliver reftel demarche, DCM emphasized the importance of fair elections and USG concern with new "TRNC citizens" being added to voter rolls. The USG thought the best solution to concerns about voter rolls would be to limit them to persons registered to vote in the 2002 elections and persons newly eligible to vote by virtue of having turned 18. The USG hoped that the GOT shared this perspective and would tell Turkish Cypriot authorities this was the solution the GOT thought best.

¶3. (C) Apakan asserted that the GOT wanted the December elections to be free and fair. He claimed the GOT had "warned" the "TRNC" about the new grants of citizenship, telling them this was the wrong time to grant them. Denktash had opposed the new citizenship grants and government parties had lost 4-5% in the polls because of the issue. However, Apakan claimed the new citizenships were the result of a processing backlog; according to "TRNC" law the applicants were entitled to citizenship.

GOT Will Talk to TRNC, But Not to HEB

¶4. (C) Apakan disagreed that Turkey should be "blamed" for non-democratic practices in the "TRNC." "TRNC" officials acted independently from Turkey, Turkey did not interfere with the "TRNC," and would not "interfere" with the "HEB," he averred. His "first reaction" to the demarche was that it was a request to interfere with "HEB judges." He said he would convey the demarche to higher levels of the MFA, adding that his opinion was that it could be conveyed to "TRNC political authorities," but not to the "HEB." MFA Cyprus Department head Levent Bilman, also present at the meeting, worried that the demarche request could be perceived as GOT support for the CTP, which had filed the suit asking that voter lists be limited to previous voters and those who had turned 18.

¶5. (C) DCM noted there was a broad perception that some Turkish institutions and individuals had taken a role in the "TRNC" elections and the GOT needed to make its position clear on the voter list issue. Moreover, whether Turkey agreed or not, many in the international community would hold Turkey responsible for events in the "TRNC."

MFA Claims U.S. Manipulating Elections

¶6. (C) Apakan replied that "you are telling us some groups are manipulating the elections. You are doing the same." He claimed there was "an impression in Ankara" that U.S. representatives were trying to influence elections. U.S. representatives were going to villages, discussing the Annan Plan, and giving advice. DCM replied that discussing the Annan Plan did not constitute interference or manipulation, and that U.S. officials would continue to do so.

Citizenship Numbers, According to the MFA

17. (C) Apakan said the "TRNC" normally granted 1500-1800 new citizenships annually. According to the MFA, the "TRNC" had granted about 53,000 citizenships from 1973 through the beginning of 2003; it had granted 1904 citizenships so far in 2003. In January and February, there were 30-plus new citizenship grants each month; in October there were 130-plus. Bilman claimed that the difference between 2002 and expectations of normal growth to the 2003 voter rolls amounted to only about 2500 new citizens, which he argued was not a significant departure from the normal trend line of new citizenships.

EDELMAN